

Dublin, Saturday  
May 30. 1863.

Dear Mr May - I heard today with  
heartly satisfaction that Vicksburg is  
in the hands of the Federals & that Port  
Hudson is likely to follow before long. With  
the whole length of the Mississippi in posses-  
sion of the Free States, the power of the Slave-  
holders & the existence of Slavery must soon  
be suffocated for want of breathing room. No  
European power could have borne such a strain  
as that which the North has been put to by  
this tremendous struggle, or borne with such  
cheerfulness & elasticity so many severe  
disappointments. My confidence in the  
value of popular institutions has been vastly  
strengthened by what I have witnessed & learned  
of the endurance, humanity, & the confidence in  
their elected rulers of the great majority of the  
American people since the war began. How I  
wish I could talk to you instead of writing about  
these things. There is a bad deal in the  
language of our writers for the press & the com-  
mon talk of our people which mortifies, grieves  
& disappoints me & yet I think much of it can  
be accounted for by their ignorance, & the cir-  
cumstances from which they derive much of their  
information. Still I am continually astonished

My dear Richard talks of emigrating to California & to Bristol Columbia, to look his father's



by the extent & violence of their moral  
lances (for such it seems to me) which  
prevails on all sides in these islands. That  
you may be speedily and entirely successful  
is my ardent wish - at least, as speedily as  
it would be consistent with the other necessities  
of ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> gradual stumbling block to your national  
glory, prosperity & tranquillity. I do not in  
the least know of the bitterness that exists  
amongst you against England for you have been  
greatly disappointed in her - but in Ireland I  
think the whole northern feeling is just as widely  
expressed as in my mind more than abroad - for  
the north is the great abode of the poor Irish.  
However the numbers of our poorer classes who  
have any correct information or any political  
opinion of their own is very much & I don't  
include them in my census - but only the  
reading & writing portion of our countrymen. I  
don't like to see in the American papers (though I  
do not know of such language) the coarse threats  
that when you have an opportunity you will  
turn your attention to England in a martial way.  
War is a clumsy expedient and it is one which  
must injure both sides, & should not be resorted  
to unless under the compulsion of something  
more imperative than mere vindictiveness.



I wish America too well to wish to see her  
engaged in a war that must do her more  
harm than good, even if she should be un-  
toldy victorious & successful to the utmost of  
her power in a struggle with England. The  
position of the English nation which has suffered  
most from the evil was an hour ~~back~~ her  
friend, the operation of Lancashire.  
There were the great consumers of her agri-  
cultural produce & their inability to buy, com-  
bined with a succession of three cold, wet sum-  
mers & ~~the~~ bad harvests have caused such a  
penetration of all kinds of business, & so many  
failures & bankruptcies as I do not remember  
at any former time. Every one I speak to has  
the same complaint of bad trade, ~~distress~~ ~~business~~  
and so forth.

The Advocate is dead. I did not think it  
right to go on with it at such rotten expense  
as the circulation was small, & I have been  
unable to get any settlement from the  
London agents for the last 17 months. Be-  
sides the truth is that a great number of the best  
provincial English papers & the best individuals, in-  
cluded, with many of the most respectable &  
abled London men are strongly northern & there  
was no one in keeping who was little partial  
~~and~~ wish-light. Any labour it cost and we  
were cheerfully given. I would like to have as willingly



My dear Richard talks of emigrating to California or to Brazil, Columbia, to look his fortune

as even if any good could be done to the  
cause which has occupied more of my thoughts  
than any other for the last 25 years. My  
prevailing feeling of late has been one of  
irritation & disappointment that I have  
been unable to do so little to stem the flood  
of falsehood & fallacy which prevails so en-  
tirely on all hands around me.

I would be very glad to hear from you &  
be sure to say whether your son is safe & well.

A friend has asked me to get him a copy  
of Thomas Parker, which you will oblige me  
by enclosing in a letter & putting <sup>it</sup> down to my  
debit. Will you please desire only one Liberator  
to be sent me in future, and stop the Standard  
sent to James A. Webb. He has got more than he  
needs of, and I can't get more money from him.

You will be sorry to hear that Professor Cairnes  
is going to the Continent for the benefit of his  
health, one of his limbs having been injured by a  
fall from his horse. I enclose a note I had from  
him today - Your daughter Adelaide may  
care for autographs - this fancy is one among  
my many weaknesses.

A prodigious emigration goes on from Ireland  
chiefly to your shores - it is said to be nearly 5000  
a week - I wish the emigrants were likely to add  
as much to your moral strength as to your material  
wealth. With kindest regards to you also

I am ever yours truly

Richd Webb